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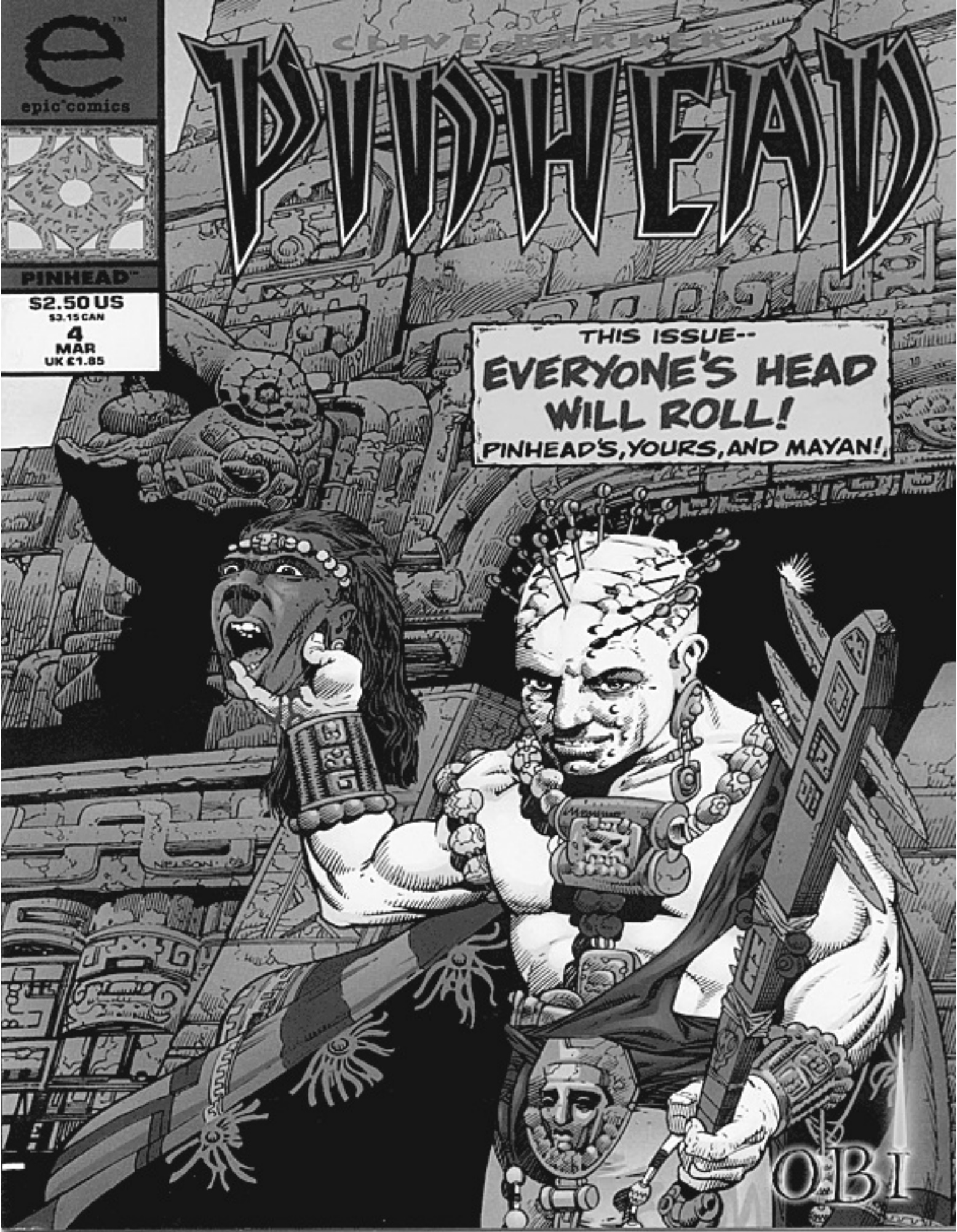
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THIS ISSUE--
EVERYONE'S HEAD WILL ROLL!
PINHEAD'S, YOURS, AND MAYAN!
NELSON
OBI

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IN 1993, THIS TEMPLE IS A ROTTING RUIN IN THE JUNGLE OF BELIZE.
IN 627 A.D. --
--NOW, TODAY--
--IT IS A HOUSE OF WORSHIP FLOURISHING UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE WARRIOR XIPE TOPEC.
TAKE PRIDE, FIGHTING MEN!
YOUR SKILL HAS BROUGHT NEW GLORY TO THE MAYAS!
D.G. CHICHESTER ♣ ERIK SALTZGABER WRITERS
PHIL GASSCOINE PENCILER
ENRIQUE VILLAGRAN ♣ RODNEY RAMOS INKERS
PHIL FELIX, DAVE SHARPE, MATT MALEY LETTERERS
MIKE KENNY COLORIST
TOM DANING EDITOR
CARL POTTS EXEC. EDITOR
TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF
THE DEVIL RIDES HIS DAY

OUR PEOPLE HAVE COWED THE INVADERS! YOU HAVE PLEASED OUR GODS, TOPEC...
...THOSE SAME GODS WHO YOU NOW GIVE THANKS TO FOR YOUR VICTORY, HMMM?
OF COURSE, AUYENTEPUI. HOW COULD I FORGET?
ESPECIALLY WITH YOU AROUND TO REMIND ME.
FINISH THE GAME!
SLUUK
FWAK
TWOK
THE NORMAL CUSTOM IS TO TAKE THE HEAD OF THE LOSING CAPTAIN, NOT THOSE OF THE ENTIRE TEAM!
AN INSPIRED INNOVATION, WARRIOR!
SPLOOSH!
I LIKED IT.

ALL THIS TRAINING, TOPEC... I APPRECIATE THE NEED FOR OUR CITY TO BE PREPARED AGAINST ATTACK...
-BUT YOU NEGLECT MY PLACE AS RELIGIOUS LEADER!
THE GODS SPEAK NOTHING OF THIS COMING STORM YOU WARN AGAINST!
THEN I SUGGEST YOU GO BACK TO YOUR RITUAL SACRIFICES, PRIEST, UNTIL YOUR INNER VISION MATCHES MINE.
THERE WILL BE AN ASSAULT, AND I WILL BE READY FOR IT.
BUT FOR APPEARANCE'S SAKE, IT MIGHT BE BETTER IF I TOOK THE LEAD IN PREDICTING OUR FUTURE.
SO AS NOT TO CONFUSE THE PEOPLE...
THIS TIME, I WILL BE READY...
WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF THE PEOPLE ARE CONFUSED WHEN THEY ARE DEAD...
...BECAUSE GREAT AUYENTEPUI FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE SIGNS THE GODS HAVE PROVIDED?
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT IN YOUR PROPHECY, TOPEC...
...BUT I'D WORRY MORE ABOUT AN ATTACK FROM WITHIN THE CITY WALLS, "GREAT WARRIOR"!

ATTACKS FROM WITHIN...
...WHERE A BATTLE RAGES ON THE PLANE OF THE MIND.
YOU MUST OPEN YOURSELF TO MY WILL, CENOBITE--TO OUR WILL.
WE ARE THE SAME--I AM BUT A FUTURE PROJECTION OF YOU. THE SAME UNHOLY SPIRIT THAT EMPOWERS YOUR OWN FLESH!
AS IT MUST BE. THERE IS A DIRE THREAT TO THE HELL WE SERVE, AND I MUST BE ALLOWED TO COMBAT IT.
A DANGER TO OUR LORD LEVIATHAN?!
YOU TRY TO CONFUSE ME, DEMON! TO USURP MY BODY FOR YOUR OWN!
IT CALLS ITSELF AGGREGATE.
A THIEF, STEALING PUZZLE CONFIGURATIONS THROUGHOUT TIME AND UNMAKING CENOBITES BEFORE THEY COME INTO EXISTENCE.
DEPRIVING HELL OF ITS TROOPS... SOWING ANARCHY IN THE FIELDS OF BLESSED ORDER!
MY BODY IS YOUR WEAPON, SELF.
...USE IT AS A WARRIOR WOULD.
ANYTHING LESS, AND I SHALL RETURN!
AND SOAK THE EARTH WITH THE BLOOD OF BOTH YOU AND THIS AGGREGATE!

HELL TODAY.
UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE CRYSTALLINE DIETY, LEVIATHAN.
IN THE WORKSHOP OF A MAD INVENTOR NAMED LUDOVICO SINISTRARI.
HELL'S PROMISE IS THAT OF EXPERIENCE BEYOND THE CONFINES OF THE FLESH, FACE-
-BUT WHAT FAITH WILL THE DAMNED HAVE WHEN THEY SEE PINHEAD FALLEN?
NONE, GEHENNA, NONE-NONE-NONE! AND NOT JUST FALLEN, REMEMBER, BUT FAILING!
PINHEAD'S MISSION TO SAVE HELL HAS COST HOW MANY MORE CENOBITES? ATKINS, BALBERITH...
ENOUGH LIP, SINISTRARI, UNLESS YOU WANT ME WEARING IT!
YOUR TREACHERY TRAPPED OUR MASTER'S BODY HERE, LEAVING ONLY HIS SPIRIT TO FIGHT OUR BATTLES THROUGH TIME!
OUR BROTHER AND SISTER WERE LOST BECAUSE THEY WERE UNFORTUNATE AMATEURS IN PLAYING THE ROLES FORCED ON THEM!
AND A "PROFESSIONAL" LIKE YOURSELF CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO OUR MASTER'S CAUSE, IS THAT IT, THESPIAN?
IF IT'S LEVIATHAN'S WILL... AND YOU'VE GOT STAGE PRESENCE LIKE MINE!
"ONE DEMON IN HIS TIME MAY PLAY MANY PARTS", GEHENNA!
POWER UP SINISTRARI'S MACHINE... I'M GOING BACK...

IN THE YEAR 627.
CAPAC MOVES THROUGH THE CITY'S SHADOWS...
...NURSING AN EVEN GREATER BLACKNESS WITHIN HIS CONNIVING HEART.
OUR TIME DRAWS NEAR, BROTHERS!
ONCE WE HAVE COMPLETED THE PLACE OF ADULATION ON THE RIDGE OF TOLMEC...
...OUR PRAYERS WILL BE ANSWERED!
NOT BY THE SUN GOD, NOT BY QUETZLCOATL, NO...
...OUR WORSHIP IS FOR THE DARK GOD, AND HIS SOLDIERS OF NIGHT AND PAIN!

THEN OUR ENEMIES WILL SUFFER!
IN JUST A FEW WEEKS, THE BLACK LIGHT WILL SHINE FORTH FROM THE BOTTOMLESS WATERS AT THE CENTER OF OUR CITY...
...GUIDING THE WAY TO AUYENTEPUI'S DOOM!
OUR WORD -- THE WORD OF LEVIATHAN -- WILL BE WHAT THE PEOPLE KNEEL DOWN TO HEAR AND OBEY!
THEN THE GODS OF THE SUN WILL BE FOREVER ECLIPSED...

A WEEK'S MARCH FROM THE CITY OF TOPEC.
THE DESIRE TO RECAPTURE PAST GLORY HANGS HEAVY IN THE AIR...
...AN OBSESSIVE LONGING FUELING EVERY FIGHTER'S SAVAGERY.
MY PEOPLE ARE GLAD FOR YOU, AGGRE-GATE!
YOUR FIERCE TRAINING, YOUR STRANGE WEAPONS; THEY MAKE US THE SUPERIOR TO ANY OF THE MIGHTY FOREST'S ARMIES!
NOT ALL WOULD AGREE, ATAHUALLPA!

IN THE CITY OF AUYENTEPUI, THE PRINCE CALLED TOPEC CLAIMS TO BE CLOSER TO THE SUN THAN YOU OR YOUR PEOPLE!
THIS PIG TOPEC LIES! NONE STANDS GREATER THAN THE CHACHAPOYAN!
WE KNOW THESE TRUTHS, TOO... BUT IT ISN'T US YOU HAVE TO CONVINCE!
TO PROVE YOURSELF TO ALL--TO CRUSH THE MAYAS WHO WOULD SPEAK THESE FALSEHOODS--MEANS A LONG, DANGEROUS MARCH!
WE HAVE NO FEAR OF THAT JOURNEY!
AT THE END OF IT, WE WILL REWARD OURSELVES WITH TOPEC'S TREASURE...
..AND OFFER THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE TO HONOR THE GODS!
TRULY THERE IS NONE MORE FEROCIOUS THAN YOU, ATAHUALLPA!
OR MORE GULLIBLE!
THE TREASURE IN TOPEC'S CITY IS FOR US ALONE! AND NOT MERELY ANOTHER OF LEVIATHAN'S PUZZLE-KEYS TO HELL...
...BUT THE KEY WITHIN THE PUZZLES THEMSELVES!
AND IN THAT SECRET IS THE PASSPORT TO OUR FREEDOM... AND THE MEANS TO OUR REVENGE...

A LONG AND DANGEROUS MARCH AWAY FROM THE CITY OF THE CHACHAPOYAN.
THE CENOBITE FACE ACTS OUT A DRAMA FOR THE MECTA PEOPLE'S RULING COUNCIL.
THE TALE HE TELLS OF VIGILANCE AND CONTEST STRIKES ME AS APPROPRIATE TO OUR OWN SITUATION.
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE SHAMAN'S DANCE, AUYENTEPUI?
I STILL SEE NO SIGN OF THE INVASION YOU PREDICT, TOPEC...
...AND PRESUMING THAT WHICH GODS DO NOT REVEAL IS A BLASPHEMY THAT SPEAKS DISASTER FOR US ALL!
DISASTER WILL COME ABOUT BECAUSE OF YOUR OWN DOUBT, PRIEST.
QUESTION MY JUDGMENT AGAIN, AND I WILL BRING IT DOWN ON YOUR HEAD PERSONALLY.
THREATEN ME, TOPEC, AND YOU THREATEN THE SUN GOD I SERVE! IS THAT YOUR INTENT? TO TEAR DOWN THE DIVINE?
AND REPLACE IT WITH WHAT? THE DARKNESS FROM BELOW? IT'S LONG BEEN RUMORED THAT YOU WORSHIP...
WATCH YOUR TONGUE, PRIEST...

I'VE HELD IT TOO LONG!
YOU'VE ALL HEARD NIGHT-MARE STORIES OF THE "BLACK LIGHT THAT WILL ECLIPSE THE SUN"!
WE MUST ASK THE QUESTIONS, "DO ITS AGENTS WALK AMONG US?"...
...AND "DOES TOPEC'S IMPERTINENCE BRAND HIM AS ONCE OF THEIR OBSCENE NUMBER?"
WHAT IS YOUR ANSWER, WARRIOR?
WE CAN FLAY THEM, MASTER... LESS SKIN WILL GIVE THEM MORE ROOM FOR UNDERSTANDING!
THAT IS MY FIRST INCLINATION, FACE... BUT THERE IS A STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE TO MAIN-TAINING A FACADE OF UNITY.
I... BEG... FOR-GIVENESS, HOLY MAN. MY CONCERN FOR OUR SAFETY HAS BLINDED ME TO ALL BUT WORRY.
YOUR FAITH IN THE SUN HAS ILLUMINATED THE TRUTH FOR ME ONCE AGAIN.
REMEMBER THIS LESSON, TOPEC! OUR CITY NEEDS YOUR DEADLY TALENTS... BUT OUR PEOPLE NEED THE GODS' BLESSINGS MORE!
AUYENTEPUI'S "CULT"... IF THEY DO EXIST, THEY MAY HOLD THE CONFIGURATION THAT HAS BROUGHT AGGREGATE TO THIS ERA.
FIND THEM BEFORE AGGREGATE DOES, AND WE MAY DISCOVER OUR PATCHWORK ENEMY'S ULTIMATE GOAL.
AND HIS MOTIVA-TION.
YES, ACTOR. AND HIS MOTIVATION...

ON THE HARD ROAD THAT LEADS TO WAR.
TELL ME MORE, AGGREGATE, OF THE TREASURE WE SHALL FIND AT THE END OF OUR MARCH!
OH, A GLORIOUS THING, ATAHUALLPA! FOR RICHES DON'T LIE ONLY IN GOLD AND JEWELS...
...SOMETIMES THE PRIZE IS POWER. SOMETIMES THE PRIZE IS VENGEANCE...
ON THE RIDGE OF TOLMEC.
WORK YOUR MUSCLES, BROTHERS, BREAK YOUR BACKS!
THE LORD'S CRADLE MUST BE POSITIONED PRECISELY TO CATCH THE RAYS FROM BELOW!
AN ACTOR CAN ONLY PICK UP SO MUCH FROM OBSERVATION...

...THE REST IS IN LEARNING YOUR LINES!
HERE'S YOUR CUE, CONSPIRATOR...
A SPY!
N-NO, MIGHTY CAPAC!
ONLY A POOR MINSTREL, SEEKING SOMETHING TO FILL HIS EMPTY LIFE!
YES, I RECOGNIZE YOU FROM THE PERFORMANCE EARLIER!
WHICH PERFORMANCE, MASTER? MINE... OR ALIYENTEPUI AND TOPEC'S?
YOU'VE NO RESPECT FOR OUR "LEADERS"? THAT'S DANGEROUS, JESTER, A RISKY THING...
GREAT RISK CAN BRING GREAT REWARDS... ISN'T THAT WHY YOU'RE HERE?
WE'RE HERE TO SEIZE HOLD OF MORE THAN A "GENERAL'S" BLOODY TRIUMPHS, OR SOME "HOLY MAN'S" SELF-EXALTING SERMONS!
AND THERE IS MORE, JESTER, SO MUCH MORE!

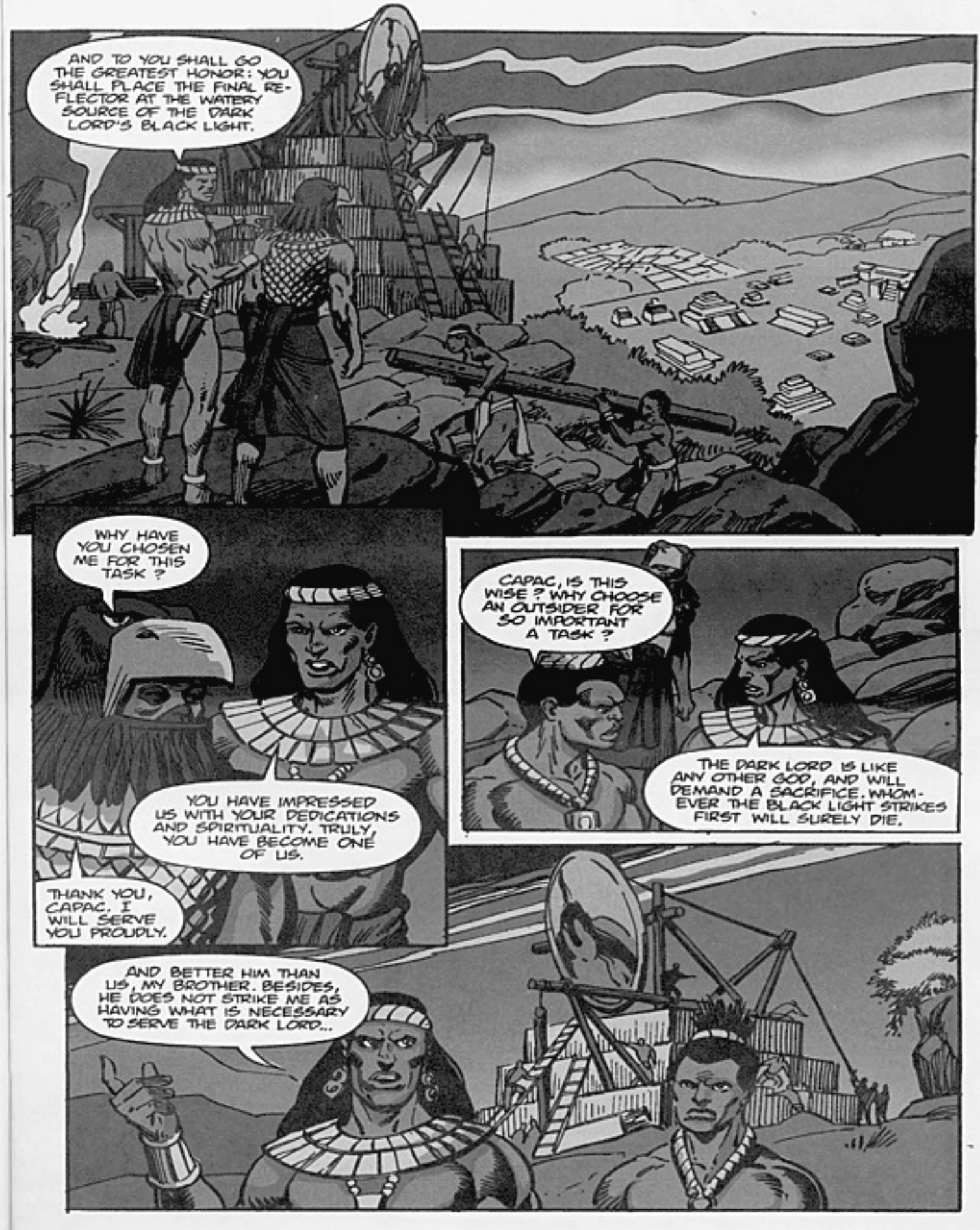
"WE'VE SEEN GLIMPSES IN THE DEEP WATERS AT THE CITY CENTER!
"DOWN, SO FAR DOWN...
"...PAST THE WRETCHED REMAINS OF TOPEC'S CONQUESTS AND AUYENTEPUI'S FAITHLESS...
"...TO WHERE OUR DARK LORD MAKES HIS PRESENCE KNOWN!
"SHINING THROUGH FROM HIS ENDLESS AND DISTANT DOMAIN IS NOT A SIMPLE TASK, EVEN FOR A GOD...
...BUT WE WILL EASE THE PASSAGE! HARVESTING HIS BLACK LIGHT, MAGNIFYING IT, ILLUMINATING THE WAY FOR HIS COMING!
AMEN!
AND IN GRATITUDE, HE WILL GRANT US KNOWLEDGE OF THE NEW MYSTERIES HE COMMANDS!
LET ME BE PART OF YOUR CAUSE, CAPAC--LET ME HELP IN THIS AWE-SOME WORK!
YOUR ENTHUSIASM IS INFECTIOUS... LEVIATHAN WILL WELCOME YOU IN-TO HIS FOLD GLADLY!
LEVIATHAN--!
I ALREADY FEEL LIKE PART OF THE FAMILY...

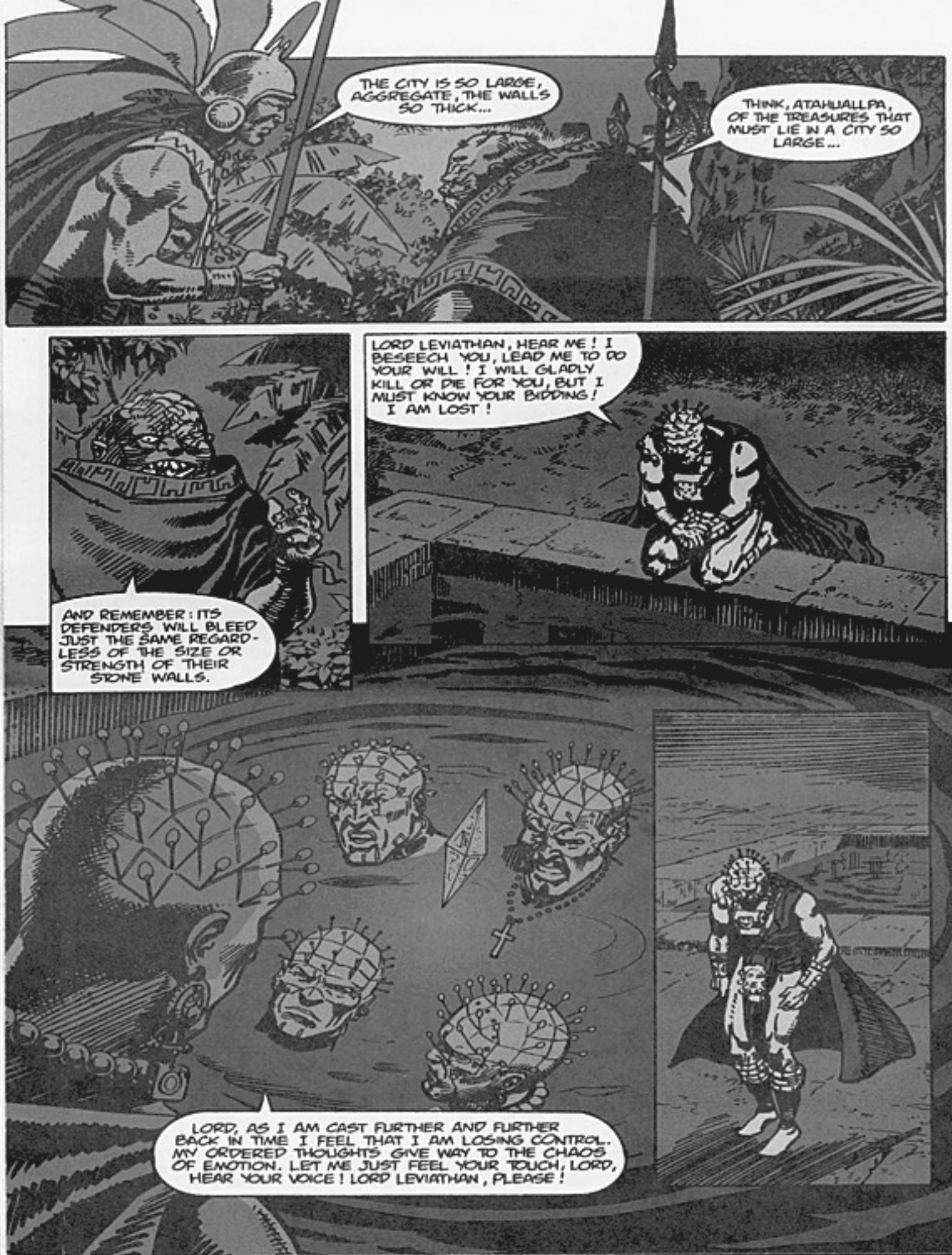
...AND HE DESCRIBED THE LIGHT AS "BLACKER THAN THE DEEPEST NIGHT, AND IT IS FELT MORE THAN SEEN!"
AND WITH SUCH EMOTION! AN ACTOR COULDN'T ASK FOR BETTER MATERIAL!
OF COURSE, I WOULD IMPROVISE MORE IN A TRUE PERFORMANCE...
BLACKER THAN NIGHT... FELT MORE THAN SEEN.
"OUR LORD'S OWN DARK-NESS..
"...WITHIN ITS ROILING EBONY THE REMAINS OF THE SOULS THAT HAVE FED ITS MAJESTY FOR ETERNITY."

THAT LIGHT SHOULD NEVER ESCAPE.
BUT IF IT DID OVER TIME...
...IF ALL THOSE GLIMMERS WERE TO BUILD BACK TOGETHER INTO ONE MALICIOUS BEAM...
WHOSE FACE DO YOU THINK I SHOULD WEAR NEXT, MASTER?
OH, DECIDING ALWAYS BRINGS BACK SUCH SWEET MEMORIES!
TO THINK I WOULD HAVE WASTED MY EXISTENCE IN FRONT OF CAMERAS, BREATHING IN DUSTY MAKEUP...
...INSTEAD OF FEELING THIS WARM MOIST! YOU OPENED UP A WHOLE WORLD FOR ME WHEN YOU TOOK ME DOWN TO HELL!
TO GET BEHIND THE MASKS THAT HUMANITY WEARS, TO TRULY GET INTO THE PART! IT'S A CHANCE FOR WHICH I'LL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL--
THERE'S WORK TO DO, CENOBITE.
WERE YOU SAYING SOMETHING IMPORTANT?
N-NO... NOTHING AT ALL.
WELL, I THINK IT'S WORTH REMEMBERING...

AS AN ARDUOUS MARCH CONTINUES THROUGH A DENSE JUNGLE...
TAKE THIS TO YOUR BUILDERS, ATAHUALLPA, AN ENGINE OF WAR TO SMASH THEIR WALLS.
WE SHALL GRIND THEM TO DUST, AGGREGATE ! TO DUST !
MY REFLECTION...!
WE ARE WASTING TIME ! WE SHOULD ATTACK MORE DIRECTLY ! THIS MARCH, THIS WAR, IS FUTILE !
THERE IS NO OTHER WAY. IF THE SPLINTERS OF OUR SOULS ARE CONSIGNED TO ONE BODY, IT MUST BE THUS.
I HAVE WAITED FOR THIS CHANCE FOR FOUR CENTURIES ! I WILL NOT SEE IT WASTED !
WE HAVE ALL WAITED ACROSS TIME AND UNTOLD SUFFERING FOR A CHANCE TO UNDO LEVIATHAN. WE MUST NOT ARGUE NOW.
BUT I WILL NOT TOLERATE--!
ENOUGH !
WE... MUST MAINTAIN... OUR HARMONY. WE CANNOT LET OUR DISPARATE PARTS DIVIDE US IF WE ARE TO SUCCEED...

AS AN INEXORABLE MARCH THROUGH THE JUNGLE HOLDS THE PROMISE OF A BATTLE TO COME, SO TOO DO THE MACHINATIONS OF AN ANGRY PRIEST...
MAY THE RITUAL OF SACRIFICE LEAD ME TO THE "INNER VISION" OF TOPEC!
LET ME READ OUR FATE IN THE ENTRAILS OF OUR ENEMIES!
IT'S TRUE! THERE WILL BE AN INVASION!
THE GODS HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR WISHES: TOPEC MUST DIE! AND I MUST TAKE HIS PLACE.
WE CANNOT ARGUE WITH THE GODS...


AND TO YOU SHALL GO THE GREATEST HONOR: YOU SHALL PLACE THE FINAL REFLECTOR AT THE WATERY SOURCE OF THE DARK LORD'S BLACK LIGHT.
WHY HAVE YOU CHOSEN ME FOR THIS TASK ?
YOU HAVE IMPRESSED US WITH YOUR DEDICATIONS AND SPIRITUALITY. TRULY, YOU HAVE BECOME ONE OF US.
THANK YOU, CAPAC. I WILL SERVE YOU PROUDLY.
CAPAC, IS THIS WISE ? WHY CHOOSE AN OUTSIDER FOR SO IMPORTANT A TASK ?
THE DARK LORD IS LIKE ANY OTHER GOD, AND WILL DEMAND A SACRIFICE. WHOMEVER THE BLACK LIGHT STRIKES FIRST WILL SURELY DIE.
AND BETTER HIM THAN US, MY BROTHER. BESIDES, HE DOES NOT STRIKE ME AS HAVING WHAT IS NECESSARY TO SERVE THE DARK LORD...


THE CITY IS SO LARGE, AGGREGATE, THE WALLS SO THICK...
THINK, ATAHUALLPA, OF THE TREASURES THAT MUST LIE IN A CITY SO LARGE...
AND REMEMBER: ITS DEFENDERS WILL BLEED JUST THE SAME REGARDLESS OF THE SIZE OR STRENGTH OF THEIR STONE WALLS.
LORD LEVIATHAN, HEAR ME! I BESEECH YOU, LEAD ME TO DO YOUR WILL! I WILL GLADLY KILL OR DIE FOR YOU, BUT I MUST KNOW YOUR BIDDING! I AM LOST!
LORD, AS I AM CAST FURTHER AND FURTHER BACK IN TIME I FEEL THAT I AM LOSING CONTROL. MY ORDERED THOUGHTS GIVE WAY TO THE CHAOS OF EMOTION. LET ME JUST FEEL YOUR TOUCH, LORD, HEAR YOUR VOICE! LORD LEVIATHAN, PLEASE!

THE NEXT DAY DAWNS BRIGHTLY, A CEREMONY CALLED BY AN AMBITIOUS PRIEST...
MECTA PEOPLE! I STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY AS YOUR DIVINE LEADER. THE GODS HAVE SPOKEN, AND THEY HAVE PROMISED US A DAY UNLIKE ANY OTHER IN OUR HISTORY!
TRUER WORDS WERE NEVER SPOKEN! TODAY WILL DOUBTLESS PROVE MY FINEST PERFORMANCE!
I HAVE NO TIME FOR YOUR PETTY POLITICAL GAMES, PRIEST!
THE SUN GOD HAS DECREED THAT THE MECTA SHALL HAVE A NEW LEADER, WARRIOR!
FOOL!
...AND HE HAS DECREED THAT YOU SHALL DIE!
AAAAUUUGGHH!!
WHA...!?

LAY INTO THEM, MEN ! SPILL THEIR WORTH-LESS BLOOD!
TO THE WALL ! KILL THESE PIGS WHERE THEY STAND !
TAKE THEM ! KILL THEM ! FOR THE CHACHOPYAN !
FOR ME.
WHAT ?
AGGREGATE.
YOUR PLAGUE OF HELL ENDS HERE!
OUT OF MY WAY, DEMON ! I'VE A PUZZLE TO DISSOLVE!

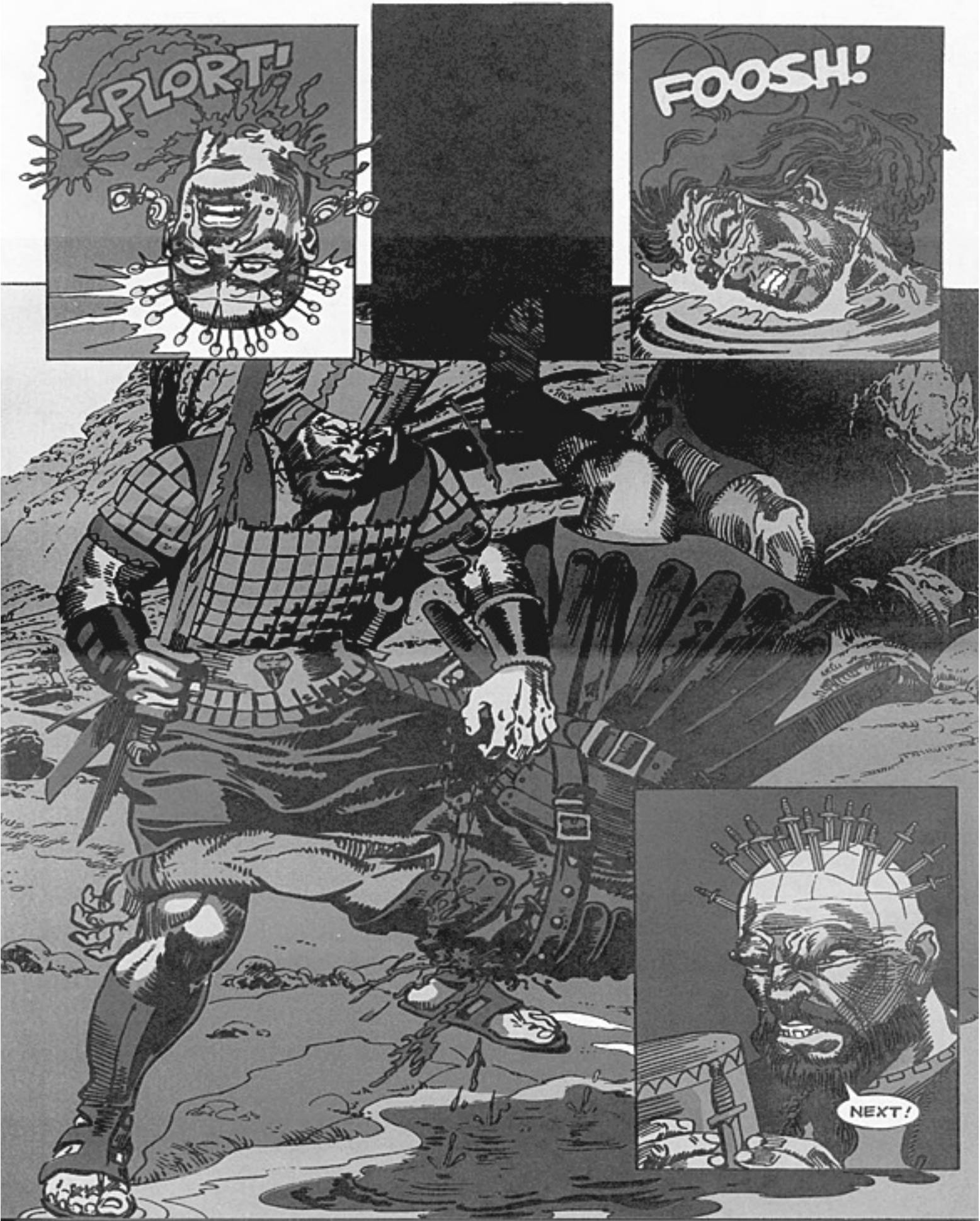
NOW! HURRY! THE DARK LORD'S TIME IS UPON US!
YOU BASTARD!
TODAY YOU DIE, PIG.
AFTER I TEAR YOUR HEART FROM YOUR BODY.

I SHOULD GUT YOU WHERE YOU LIE, PIG!
KILL HIM NOW!
LEVIATHAN'S BLACK LIGHT!
LLLOOORRRDDD..!
WHAT ELABORATE NEW MANNER OF PUZZLE IS THIS?

WHO ARE YOU!? WHY ARE YOU OPPOSING LEVIATHAN'S ORDER!? HOW ARE YOU UNDOING THE PUZZLES!? TELL ME! TELL--
... ME?
THE MINDSCAPE--
LIAR! BETRAYER! I WARNED YOU! OUR PURPOSE IS TO KILL! IF YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN HOW, I WILL TAKE MY BODY BACK AND SHOW YOU!
STRUCK DUMB, CENOBITE?
LET ME SHOW YOU THE COST OF YOUR ERROR. HOW IRONIC THAT YOU WILL DIE AT THE HANDS OF YOUR LORD...

THE DARK LORD'S LIGHT! THE DARK LORD'S LIGHT! WE HAVE FOUND A NEW GOD'S FAVOR IN IT'S OBSIDIAN BEAM!
L-L-LORD YOU ARE K-KILLING ME...
...M-MUST SAVE P-P-PINHEAD...
AARRGGHH!!
REMEMBER ME... PLEASE...

THE DARK LIGHT-! NNNOOO!!!
NO! NOT YET! THERE'S MORE THIS PUZZLE HAS TO TEACH ME!
BACK IN THE MINDSCAPE.
DIE, BETRAYER!
NO! NO! DAMN YOU, AGGREGATE...!
NNNOOO!!!
THE GODS AND I WILL NOT BE DENIED!
MY BODY IS AGAIN MY OWN! I AM WHOLE NOW.


SPLORT!
FOOSH!
NEXT!